

**Testimony of Greg Principato
President, Airports Council International-North America**

before the

**House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
*Climate Change and Energy Independence: Transportation and
Infrastructure Issues***

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Chairman Oberstar, Ranking Member Mica, members and staff of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, thank you for allowing Airports Council International-North America (ACI-NA) the opportunity to participate in this important hearing regarding global climate change. My name is Greg Principato and I serve as President of ACI-NA. ACI-NA member airports enplane more than 95 percent of the domestic and virtually all the international airlines passenger and cargo traffic in North America. Nearly 400 aviation-related businesses are also members of ACI-NA.

There is broad international agreement that climate change is an issue of global significance and the world must act now to tackle the problem. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that aviation contributes about two to three percent of greenhouse gas emissions globally. While the industry's contribution is relatively small, forecasts continue to predict robust growth in aviation. The IPCC estimates aviation's contribution could increase to five percent or more in 2050. ACI-NA member airports are working proactively to address this issue on a local, regional, national, and international level.

Recognizing that the industry's main contribution to global warming - emissions from the operation of aircraft - is outside the control of any individual airport, our members are doing their part to minimize impacts to climate change just as with other environmental impacts such as water quality, noise, and local air quality.

Aviation is a global industry, but the real constraints on meeting the industry's growing capacity demands are felt on a local level. Even though greenhouse gas emissions are not regulated in the United States, many airports are proactively working to reduce those emissions associated with airport operations on an individual airport basis in order to meet the capacity needs of the global aviation system.

Greenhouse gas emission reduction strategies employed by airports have included: investing in and promoting the use of alternative fuel and low emission vehicles and energy saving equipment; recycling building and construction materials, waste and water; improving the operational efficiency of the airfield and landside system; acquiring green power; and providing emissions reducing services for aircraft at the gate.

As a few examples, Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport has converted 100 percent of the light and medium duty fleet, 72 percent of the heavy duty and off-road fleet, and 100 percent of the bus and shuttle van fleet to low emission or alternative fuel vehicles. Boston Logan International Airport provides preferred parking for drivers of hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles. Operators of several airports, including Portland and Denver

International Airports, have conducted inventories to determine their contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. Los Angeles International Airport has an on-site hydrogen fuel generating station. Numerous airports have installed 400 hertz power and preconditioned air units at gates to minimize emissions from aircraft auxiliary and ground power units. Sacramento International Airport installed a jet-fuel pipeline to eliminate emissions from fuel truck traffic.

Airports have also reduced greenhouse gas emissions by implementing initiatives to reduce waste disposal and energy use. Extensive waste management programs at airports such as San Diego, Seattle-Tacoma, Fort Lauderdale, and Baltimore/Washington Thurgood Marshall International Airports include recycling, reusing and source reduction components that eliminate the need to dispose of everything from coffee grinds to newspapers to construction debris. Last year Terminal A at Boston Logan International Airport became the first airport terminal in the world to be certified by the U.S. Green Building Council as meeting the requirements for LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. Several other airports are currently working toward LEED certification for new or renovated terminal projects, including Indianapolis and Oakland.

Sustainability Programs and Environmental Management Systems (EMSs) are also becoming increasingly widespread at airports across the U.S as mechanisms to minimize their environmental footprint. Sustainability has been described as a holistic strategy that strives to balance the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Within the airport context, sustainability has broad implications throughout the entire system, including energy consumption, environmental impacts and overall facility life-cycle costs. This typically addresses operating costs such as airport infrastructure, transportation fleet, utilities and a full range of social issues such as employee retention programs and community outreach. Sustainability has become a way of doing business at many airports such as O'Hare, which has developed a Sustainable Design Manual to guide its entire Modernization Program. Several airports, including Miami-Dade County, Westchester County and Denver, have also implemented

EMSs - a set of processes and practices that enable an organization to reduce its environmental impacts and increase its operating efficiency.

Those are just a few examples of the growing number of initiatives airports across the country have taken to reduce their impact to global climate change.

Also on an industry level, ACI-NA works to promote and recognize environmental innovation at airports through an annual awards program now in its 11th year. Providing venues for regular information sharing also helps our member airports learn about the environmental programs and initiatives undertaken by their colleagues across the country.

The Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP), established as a pilot program under Vision 100, has provided an invaluable resource for airports in helping to better understand and address many of the environmental issues facing the industry, including a recently-initiated project to develop a guidebook for airports to use in inventorying their greenhouse gas emissions.

There is a concerted effort by all sectors in the aviation industry – airports, airlines, aircraft and engine manufacturers, and air navigation services – to work together to make the industry cleaner and greener. This effort is not new. In the last 40 years for example, aircraft have become 70 percent more fuel efficient (with a 20 percent increase in efficiency in the past 10 years), and these cross-industry efforts continue. One example of those efforts is the Commercial Aviation Alternative Fuels Initiative, in which airports, airlines, manufacturers, and FAA are working jointly to identify and encourage alternative fuel sources for aircraft.

ACI-NA, through ACI, is also an observer to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which has endorsed the development of an open emissions trading system for aviation. ACI has called upon ICAO, recognizing its standard-setting role, to devise more stringent emission standards for aircraft. We believe the policy measure with the least negative impact on the aviation industry will be the integration of aviation's

carbon dioxide emissions into a global emissions trading system. Capacity constraints, taxation, or charges that do not satisfy ICAO's criteria for legitimate aeronautical charges are not viable solutions to address aviation's contribution to climate change.

ACI-NA airports will continue to take action to minimize emissions within their control and will support the development of technologies and design strategies in the aviation industry that will help reduce aircraft emissions globally. To further support these proactive efforts, ACI-NA would like to see progress made in the upcoming Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization legislation to address the following areas:

Airport Improvement Program (AIP): In order to enhance the environment by encouraging the proactive adoption of best environmental practices, ACI-NA would propose the establishment of a pilot program of not more than 10 public-use airports where airport sponsors could use AIP funds to plan, design and construct new terminal facilities or retrofit existing terminal facilities with equipment, systems or other means of reducing adverse environmental impacts. The Secretary could select applicants for the pilot giving priority to those airports that will achieve the greatest air quality or other environmental benefits. This program would provide an opportunity to develop and employ innovative green systems and for DOT to assess the benefits of such projects.

ACI-NA also seeks to expand AIP eligibility to cover both the development of EMSs and the implementation of measures identified in such EMSs. Development of an EMS is a necessary first step, but the real environmental benefits will be achieved by implementation of measures identified in the EMS. ACI-NA would like to work with the Committee to amend the definitions of both airport planning (for creation of EMSs) and airport development (for implementation of measures identified in such systems).

Additionally, ACI-NA encourages the Committee to remove the requirement in the current AIP program that only allows airports in nonattainment or maintenance areas to acquire low emission vehicles or convert existing vehicles to low emission vehicles. We

believe that the federal government should encourage airports to proactively convert their fleets regardless of location.

We also would ask that AIP eligibility be expanded to include facilities for providing compressed natural gas (CNG), electric recharging facilities for low emission technology vehicles operating on airports. While, as discussed above, conversion of low emission ground support vehicles in nonattainment areas is eligible, many of the vehicles that regularly operate at airports are not owned by the airport sponsor. Many airside vehicles are owned and operated by airlines or other aeronautical service providers. Courtesy vans and buses are operated by rental car companies, parking lot operators or other third parties. Amending the AIP regulations would encourage the use of low emission vehicles by third parties by allowing airports to construct facilities at a convenient on-airport location to provide fuel for such vehicles.

Airport Cooperative Research Program: We urge to the Committee to make ACRP permanent and authorize it at the Administration's requested level of \$15 million. ACI-NA also supports the designation of \$5 million for much needed environmental research which helps the industry better understand and continue to minimize its impacts on climate change and a whole range of environmental areas.

Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen): Airports throughout the United States support NextGen initiatives to modernize the air transportation system. An improved system increase efficiency through smoother air traffic flow, resulting in fuel savings and reduced emissions at the airport level and en route. Airports believe that these investments require that the FAA have a stable and predictable funding system to ensure sufficient capital resources are available.

In closing ACI-NA and its member airport thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this important matter. We look forward to working with you in addressing global climate change.